



COUNTY OF CHISAGO

2021 ANNUAL REPORT

Chisago County Government Center
313 North Main Street, Suite 160A
Center City, MN 55012-9663

Commissioners:

District 1
Chris DuBose
District 2
Rick Greene
District 3
Marlys Dunne
District 4
Ben Montzka
District 5
Mike Robinson

In 2021, Chisago County and its staff worked hard to navigate the challenges of the global pandemic, so the County could provide the valuable services the County and its residents needed. Here is a brief look at how *your* County government fared during 2021:

Public Works – 2021 saw County Maintenance involved in grading CR's 55 & 86 in preparation for paving in 2022. Maintenance also performed annual road and bridge work, including, but not limited to, culvert replacements, shouldering, mowing and noxious weed treatment. Public Works is continuing the Wild Parsnip eradication efforts, in partnership with the Environmental Services Department and the Chisago County Soil & Water Conservation District.

The following projects were delivered in 2021:

- CSAH 30 Improvements: Using Federal funds, the highway was reconstructed in concrete between TH 95 and CSAH 10.
- CSAH 4 Resurfacing: The highway was reclaimed and paved between CSAH 2 & CSAH 7.
- CR 64 & CR 65 Resurfacing: CR 65 between 430th St and CR 64 and CR 64 between CR 65 and the City of North Branch limits was reclaimed and paved.
- CSAH 11 Microsurfacing: CSAH 11 between CSAH 14 and CR 72 was microsurfaced to address severe rutting.
- 2021 Pavement Maintenance Projects: Annual mill and overlay projects on the following highways:
 - CSAH 1 from I-35 to CSAH 30
 - CSAH 4 from CSAH 10 to CSAH 7
 - CSAH 19 at the I-35 interchange
 - CSAH20 from TH 8 to approximately North Lakes Drive
 - CSAH 23 from Itasca Ave to TH 8
 - CSAH 23 from CSAH 25 to CSAH 24
 - CSAH 30 from CSAH 7 to Alger Ave
 - CR 68 from Isanti County Line to Falcon Avenue
- 2021 Seal Coat Projects: The following highways were seal coated:
 - CSAH 1 from I-35 to the Pine County Line
 - CSAH 15 from the Washington County Line to CSAH 23
 - CSAH 19 from I-35 to the Isanti County Line
 - CSAH 21 from US TH 8 to CSAH 20
 - CSAH 26 from US TH 8 to MN TH 95
 - CSAH 30 from Alger Avenue to the Pine County Line
 - CR 55 from CSAH 30 to 517th Street
 - CR 74 from CSAH 14 to CSAH 9
- 2021 Retro-Reflective Pavement Marking Projects: Annual striping on various County highways.

The following projects are in development:

- Preliminary design and environmental activities continue on the TH 8 Reconstruction Project
- Work continues with the Auditor's Office on updating the Public Ditch system.
- Preliminary work has begun on the CSAH 17 extension, CSAH 6 Reconstruction, CR 70 Reconstruction, CR 76 Reconstruction & CR 59 Reconstruction projects.
- Engineering studies were begun for 2 locations:
 - I-35/CSAH 22 interchange and corridor
 - I-35/CSAH 19 interchange

Probation – The Probation Department provides adult and juvenile supervision for the Chisago County District Court, utilizing the latest evidence-based strategies to promote public safety and offender rehabilitation. The following is a snapshot of the services provided to the Court and citizenry of Chisago County.

- Adult caseload as of 12/31/2021 was 1042 adults and 1105 cases.
- Juvenile caseload as of 12/31/2021 was 58 juveniles and 72 cases.
- Juvenile Agents attended approximately 159 Court hearings.
- Juvenile Agents continued to work and maintain visibility with our schools.
- Adult Agents attended approximately 423 Court hearings.
- Probation Agents completed 181 bail evaluations.
- Juvenile Agents completed 22 juvenile mental health screenings.
- Probation Agents completed 500 field visits on adults and juveniles, maintaining a presence in our communities.
- Probation Agents continued attending EBP and other relevant trainings.

Recorder – The Department saw a continued increase in recording documents for 2021 continuing the recent recording trend, which was especially challenging due to reduced staffing because of COVID. Like 2020, vitals record income remained flat because the public had a hard time getting documents notarized for processing due to the statewide shutdowns. The Department saw income increased because some counties remain closed to the public, while Chisago continued processing vitals that other counties would typically process. Chisago’s online tract index known as LandShark did see an increase because it was the only way companies could complete tract index searches when the Government Center was closed to the public – this would not have been possible if the County had not gotten the tract index imaged and loaded into the system January 2020.

Land Notification began in 2020, which is a program where the public can sign up to receive alerts should a real estate document be filed within our Department against their name, business name or property identification number(s). This a free service that we are offering to the public to notify them of property fraud.

Assessor – The Assessor’s Office is responsible for the valuation and classification of all real and some personal property. We respond to public inquiries regarding any property, maintains records of all programs, and defends the valuation and classification of property at Local or County Board of Appeal and Equalization meetings or Tax Court. We are responsible for the administration of the State tax programs such as: all types of homesteads (residential, agricultural, relative, actively farming) disabled veterans homestead exclusion, aggregate resource preserve, wetlands, green acres, rural preserve land and Sustainable Forest Incentive Act. We research properties that file for exemptions to make sure the property and organization meet the requirements. We submit reports to the Minnesota Department of Revenue to ensure that residents who qualify for a tax refund may receive so in a timely manner. We verify issues and process abatements in certain circumstances.

A few items to highlight from 2021:

- John Keefe retired after 19 years as the Chisago County Assessor.
- Re-Hired Daryl Moeller to replace John Keefe as County Assessor.
- Larry Sandberg retired after 15 years of service to Chisago County. Replaced with John Denney.
- Increased our productivity with our field devices and the capability to transfer data from mobile assessor into Vision CAMA.
- There was substantial progress made in catching up on the Statutory Quintile inspection requirement.
- Continued work with MAAO and AMC on procedural reforms to the Minnesota property tax system through legislation.
- The 2021 State Board of Equalization was excellent with no issued State orders or follow up issues for 2022.

County Total Parcel Count	
Taxable Real Estate	27430
Exempt Real Estate:	1766
Personal Property:	201
Manufactured Home:	1003
County Total:	30400

MARKET TRENDS		
	% Change from Last Year	Amount of New Construction
Residential	24.4%	\$62,101,800

Agricultural (2a)	22.2%	\$88,500
Commercial/Industrial	4.3%	\$7,773,200
Apartments	15.3	\$748,200
Mobile Home Parks	7.4%	\$0
Totals	21.5%	\$70,711,700

County Auditor-Treasurer – In 2021, the Department continued to maintain voter registrations, process property transfers, manage expense payments and revenue receipts, calculate and collect property taxes and conduct financial report and internal audits. Department highlights include:

- The County received an unmodified (accurate and compete) Annual Audit for its 2020 finances with no findings.
- We received a Bond Rating upgrade with Standard & Poors. Our rating was upgraded from AA to AA+ which equates to interest saving on bond issuance.
- In 2021, the County collected 98% (\$43.5 million) of the County’s share of the current year property taxes.
- In 2021, the Department collected and distributed \$61.1 million of property tax to the taxing jurisdictions in the County.
- The Department received and is completing all monitoring and reporting for the \$5.5 million in ARPA funds for COVID-19 relief.

Environmental Services – The Department oversees planning, zoning and building codes, coordinates solid waste, recycling, household hazardous waste and septic programs, manages shoreland, wetlands, parks & trails, and water resources. General Highlights from 2021 include:

Planning, Zoning & Construction Permitting Division:

- Issued 1,124 construction permits compared to 1,312 the in the previous year; filled a vacant permit administration clerical position; New home construction was on par with the past several years issuing 143 new home permits compared to 136 in 2020. Department permit and construction related revenues exceeded \$920,000 (13%) over projections.
- Administered 20 Variance requests by the Board of Adjustment and Appeals; and, administered 6 subdivision/plat, 13 Conditional Use Permit (CUP), and 3 Interim Use Permit (IUP) requests through the Planning Commission. The year began with public meetings conducted virtually, with in-person meetings resuming in June (Board of Adjustment and Appeals) and July (Planning Commission).
- Completed and Continued work on key ordinance updates, including:
 - One Acre Buildable / Home Site Area – Ordinance Nos. 072121-1 and 072121-3 were adopted in July 2021 removing “one acre buildable” language from the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances and replacing it with “home site area” language.
 - SSTS Standards – Ordinance No. 072121-2 was adopted in July 2021 removing buildable soil area requirements and reducing and providing exemption to percolation tested soils area and holding tank allowance.
 - Accessory Structures and Uses – Ordinance No. 102021-1 was adopted in October 2021 addressing accessory structures and uses in the Agricultural, Agricultural Preserve and Protection and Transfer Districts.
 - Commercial Shooting Range Ordinance – The Planning Commission continued efforts to develop a new ordinance pertaining to commercial shooting ranges, with a public hearing being conducted in March 2022.

Parks & Trails Division:

- Awarded a State of Minnesota DNR Legacy Grant (GMRPTC22-05) to complete a 2.6-mile extension of the Sunrise Prairie Regional Trail. The trail project will complete the connection between the cities of North Branch and Harris.
- The Swedish Immigrant Regional Trail project through Interstate State Park to Taylors Falls City Hall was completed along with the east-end trail segment community engagement survey and feasibility report study. Special thanks to LCCMR and Environmental and Natural Resources Trust Fund for their support.

Solid Waste, Recycling, Household Hazardous Waste Division:

- Carried out the continued administration of 30-Solid Waste company licenses including 25 Hauling, 9-Recycling Facility, 1-Construction and Demolition (C&D) Landfill, and 1-Transfer Station license; continued with active collaboration with the ECSWC (East Central Solid Waste Commission) on waste handling and management within the region; and carried out the

administration of the counties active recycling subsidy programing and utilization of annual SCORE Grant proceeds of \$163,615 in 2021.

- Successfully operated the HHW had another record year serving 2920 households (a 3% increase over 2020 participation). The average weight of hazardous waste collected also increased to 120 tons in 2021 with a record 17 ship-outs. The PaintCare recycled paint reimbursement increased to \$46,393 (over \$45,642 in 2020).

Countywide Water Resources Division:

- For 2021-22, the Lower St. Croix Partners received \$1,264,531 in State Watershed Based Implementation Funding to implement projects identified in the Lower St. Croix Work Plan. The Work Plan includes ten Grant Activities. Chisago County is the Lead agency for Activity 7: Internal Analyses, which has a grant amount of \$50,000 to calculate the internal loading of phosphorus on two lakes in the watershed estimated at \$25,000 each. Chisago County submitted competitive grant applications for Goose and Rush Lakes on behalf of area lake associations, and for Little Lake on behalf of the Chisago Lakes Lake Improvement District.
- Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) promoted at numerous community outreach events and collaboratively with the Comfort Lake – Forest Lake Watershed District (CLFLWD), conducted 18,116 watercraft inspections and 93 decontaminations at 24 lakes. The county found no new infestations of zebra mussels, spiny waterfleas or Starry stonewort through multiple staff and volunteer monitoring at 21 lakes and rivers (66 volunteers and 330 volunteer hours served). Unfortunately, staff reported a new observation of Eurasian watermilfoil at Kroon Lake. The County received 6 bait bins which have been installed at six area launches to promote proper bait disposal. Invasive phragmites roadside surveys were conducted in four townships and Harris and found two unreported populations of the invasive species.

Sheriff's Office – The Office focused efforts in 2021 on improving traffic safety and technology. Chisago County had a 120% increase in traffic related fatalities, totaling 11, for 2021. In response, the Sheriff's Office increased traffic safety funding and created a traffic enforcement division utilizing ghost enforcement vehicles, enhanced speed technology and targeted enforcement. The Office also broadened its Body Worn Camera program to the Jail. This program continues to enhance transparency while improving staff oversight. There were 607 arrests made by the Sheriff's Office in 2021 and 734 cases referred to the Chisago County Attorney's Office for review and prosecution.

- Patrol – In 2021 The Chisago County Sheriff's Office Patrol Division completed its first year of having Body Worn Cameras assigned to all uniformed Deputies. The program has been a success from the perspective of a patrol deputy as well as a citizen requesting a recording of an incident involving them. 2021 proved to be a busier year with calls for service and traffic related matters. New enforcement techniques and ideas were drafted and will be implemented into 2022 while we adapt to Chisago Counties growing population and public expectations. The division handled 53,828 calls for service in 2021. This is a 13.6% increase in total calls for service from 2020.
 - Notables include:
 - Traffic Stops = 6,506
 - Driving Complaints = 1,399
 - Business, Park and Area Checks = 20,840
 - Medicals = 1,500
 - Suspicious Vehicle or Person(s) = 620
- Investigations – The Investigations Division of the Sheriff's Office assists patrol and other agencies with aiding in complex cases or conflict situations. Investigations further bolstered their forensic examination capabilities in 2021, by updating equipment including hardware and software for cell phone and computer examinations. Investigations assisted in over 522 cases in 2021 compared to only 345 in 2020.
 - Notables include:
 - 954 Group A and Group B crime arrests in 2021
 - Search Warrants – 82 executed in 2021 by Investigations
 - Assisted MN BCA with 2 Sex Trafficking Sting Operations
 - 61 Forensic phone examinations and 2 forensic computer examinations conducted

- Court Security/Bailiffs – The Court Security/Bailiff personnel is responsible to ensuring that the Government Center is safe for all employees and visitors. In ensuring safety, all visitors are required to enter through a metal detector. In 2021, Security personnel reported the following statistics.
 - Bag Count – 16,961
 - October was the busiest month with 1934 bags scanned/checked
 - February was the slowest month with only 837 bags scanned/checked
 - 593 Prohibited Items Confiscated
 - 465 - Sharp Objects
 - 9 – Guns, Firearms, Magazines
 - Court Security and Bailiffs also render services and respond to calls all over the Government Center and adjacent property and parking lots.
 - In 2021, Court Security staff reported 186 rendered services including over 100 parking lot safety checks and nearly 40 handicap/elderly assists.
- Administrative Services/Records – The Records staff had one of their busiest years to date in 2021. For the first time ever, the Sheriff’s Office processed over 3,000 records or permit requests.
 - Gun Permits
 - Permit to Purchase: 355
 - Permit to Carry: 1,291
 - Permit to Carry Renewal: 647
 - Fingerprints: 340
- Jail – The 2021 Average Daily Population was 33.38 incarcerated persons, which is a slight increase from 2020. The low Average Daily Population numbers over the past two years can be attributed to the COVID 19 pandemic. The jail is not limiting the types of new charges or warrants that will be accepted due to the pandemic; even covid-positive persons are being accepted into the jail.
 - Jail staff processed 1252 intakes and 1253 releases within the 2021 calendar year.
 - Other projects and achievements include:
 - Preventative COVID-19 measures successfully maintained throughout the entire year.
 - Improved access to physical and mental health care by doubling provider coverage.
 - Procurement of an x-ray body scanner device, utilizing grant funding, to enhance contraband screening.
 - Overhauled the incoming mail process to eliminate that route for contraband to enter the facility.
- Dispatch – In 2021 the Office’s Emergency Communication Division received 20,608 emergency 911 calls, with 15,996 of those received as wireless calls. In addition, 61,467 administrative calls were processed through the division.
 - Other updates include:
 - Stringent PPE/Pandemic measures were continued to maintain a staffed and functional workplace during the Covid-19 crisis.
 - Completed the triennial BCA/FBI audit.
 - Switched from the traditional 8.5-hour shift to 12 hour shifts to improve efficiency.
 - All staff are T-CPR training compliant/certified per new MSS 403.03, subd. 1
 - Implemented the new Mental Health prescreen procedure, per MSS 403.03, subd 1 (in conjunction with Canvas Health)
- Emergency Management (EM) – Emergency Management had a busy 2021 as it continued to assist public health with the ongoing response to Covid variants.
 - EM assisted our Public Safety partners with their ongoing personal protective equipment (PPE) needs, while tracking overall response with HSEM.
 - Partnered with FEMA and the County Auditor’s Office in efforts to improve election security.
 - EM added needed equipment and technology to the Emergency Operations Center to prepare for county wide emergency response.

Health and Human Services – Chisago County Health and Human Services staff provided services throughout 2021 operating in a hybrid model. Staff were working remotely, out in the community, from their own homes, and/or at our offices in Center City and North Branch. This flexible staffing plan provided timely and more efficient services for everyone in the community, ensuring that everyone we serve received necessary services in their homes and that our offices were open to the public during all business hours.

Many of the state and federal waivers that were put in place at the beginning of the pandemic in 2020 continued through 2021. These waivers allowed individuals and families receiving services to continue to receive necessary food or financial support without having to repeatedly re-certify. Our protective services staff continued to be out in the community meeting with families, children, and vulnerable adults as necessary to ensure everyone's safety. Health and Human Services Case Managers and Assessors were able to meet with individuals both in person as well as virtually through technology.

- MnCHOICES Assessors completed 1,019 MnCHOICES Assessments for Chisago County residents, qualifying them for services and supports in the community.
- Currently there are 708 Chisago County residents receiving services through disability waivers with a total disability waiver budget of \$53.9 million. The majority of those dollars are spent here in Chisago County paying for direct services and supports for individuals.
- 209 adults and 122 children received support and services from Chisago County Behavioral Health Case Managers. Additionally, 134 individuals were seen for substance use/chemical dependency. Referrals for these services come in from Individuals, schools, clinics, law enforcement, courts, and other community partners.
- Over 2,500 individuals received support through the Income Maintenance Program. This includes cash assistance, emergency assistance, food support and housing support programs. Additionally, 112 families were served through the childcare assistance program, helping to provide quality childcare for families.
- Our Child Support Program collected \$5,323,718 in 2021; meeting the obligation to families in Chisago County at a rate of 80%, which ranked 12th in the state. They also collected \$1,570,368 on arrears obligations at a rate of 78% and ranked 11th in the state.
- Chisago County Adult Protection received 364 Adult Protection reports in 2021. Of those, 128 were screened in for investigation. The majority of those screened out were offered other services or supports through Health and Human Services to help keep them safe in their home and community.
- Chisago County Child Protection received 903 intakes in 2021. This is more than a 10% increase over the number of reports received in 2020.
- Chisago County currently has 83 licensed adult foster homes. Three of those homes are dual licensed to provide services to both adults and children. Seven new corporate adult foster homes were licensed in 2021. We also have 38 licensed Family Child Foster Homes. We have seen a significant decline in family child foster care homes during the pandemic.
- Public Health's COVID-19 response remained the top priority for 2021. Public Health conducted nearly 90 vaccination clinics across the county administering approximately 10,000 COVID-19 vaccinations. They also worked closely with the schools, long term care facilities, and other agencies to address continued issues and concerns around COVID-19 and vaccinations. While focusing on the Pandemic Public Health was still able to complete 740 Maternal Child Health home/phone visits, 44 outreach activities for the Child and Teen Check-up program and, enroll an additional 192 babies and prenatal clients into the Women, Infants and Child (WIC) program.
- Chisago County Veterans Services continued their public outreach efforts in 2021 and re-established the Veterans Coffee Talks. The Coffee Talks were put on hold for a while due to most businesses not allowing large gatherings. The talks have now expanded to include both the North Branch American Legion and the Zion Lutheran Church in Chisago City. These talks are well attended and appreciated by the veterans in Chisago County. There are currently 3,956 Veterans living in Chisago County. VA compensation and benefits for these veterans exceeds \$16.5 million and an additional \$15.2 million is paid for medical care. The Veterans Service Office assisted veterans through 323 office visits, 616 phone visits, and 73 emails.

Economic Development – The Chisago County HRA-EDA assists with business expansions and community development projects, encourages faster and more reliable Internet service, and promotes and maintains affordable housing opportunities. In 2021, the HRA-EDA:

- Served a total of 39 clients through the Small Business Development Center (SBDC). Kathy Lindo joined the team and is now providing SBDC consulting services. She contacted approximately 70 Chisago County business owners to let them know and assist with the Restaurant Revitalization grants and the Main Street Business programs.
- Administered \$1,090,37 in Small Business and Nonprofit Relief Grants to 211 small businesses and 17 nonprofits in Chisago County. The COVID funds were administered on behalf of Chisago County.
- The HRA-EDA continued to work toward better Internet services by working with townships and cities in the County looking for fast, reliable internet. With new federal and state financing we are understanding which providers will provide service and where. The HRA-EDA also continues to be the fiscal agent for the Chisago Lakes Blandin Broadband Communities \$75,000 grant and assisting on the many projects stemming from the grant funds and program.

- Business development highlights include attraction of All Mac and Service Grinding and Sharpening Inc., as well as the building completion of A-1 Tire, North Star Insulation and Fox Valley Metrology. Kendell Howard began its 25,000 square foot expansion.
- The property owned in partnership by the City of Wyoming and the HRA-EDA was sold for industrial spec buildings with one tenant secured. There will be two buildings one with 20,000 square feet and the other 40,000 to 60,000 square feet.
- The 84-unit Lindstrom Senior Living and 78-unit Olindo Trail apartments opened their doors to tenants. The 32-unit Heritage Court Senior Housing and 144-unit Falcon Apartments broke ground and are underway.
- The Housing Trust Fund program was established and funded. There have been two applications received that are pending.
- A committee was formed to create a targeted marketing plan. New marketing ideas are being implemented to attract businesses to the county including a Labor Assessment and an Industrial Business Forgivable Loan program.
- Another committee was formed to work together with stakeholders throughout the county. A survey was conducted, and the committee has gleaned insight to how the stakeholder's band together around infrastructure (including broadband) and how to fund it. The Highway 8 Strategic Framework was formed out of this committee to study land uses and economic impact around the anticipated Highway 8 reconstruction.

Attorney's Office – In spite of the ongoing obstacles presented by COVID-19, the County Attorney's Office continued to prosecute all crimes and offenses for the County and provide both consequences for juvenile delinquents and supportive services for youth and their families. In the capacity as legal counsel for various County departments, the Office works to keep children safe from abuse and neglect and pursue protection for adults by representing the County Health and Human Services Department. Additionally, the County Attorney's Office provides legal representation and advice for County departments, staff, and elected officials on a wide variety of issues, including contract review, data practices response or opinion, and other unique or novel questions requiring legal research or opinions. A great deal of activity in other departments requires some response from a staff member in the County Attorney's Office. The County Attorney's Office navigated turnover in our own staff and assisted other departments as they experienced turnover in personnel. Each change can prompt the need for additional training and coordination to maintain business operations and services/responses to county residents. County attorneys provided specific training presentations to social services, law enforcement, Planning Commission, and have worked with school districts to provide quarterly Safe Schools meetings. Statistically we saw a slight uptick in the number of matters handled as compared to 2020 which revealed a significant downturn due to the pandemic.

- In 2021 the Office reached out to and sought justice for 895 victims of crime, for both personal and property crimes.
- In 2021 the Office charged over 1,889 criminal cases including adult and juvenile delinquency matters.
- Attorneys made a total of 10,732 court appearances during the year, swiftly and smoothly responding to the many changes in procedure necessitated by COVID-19 and transitioning between in-person and remote (Zoom) hearings. All in-person hearings followed the use of strict COVID-19 protocols which helped to keep participants, jurors, attorneys and court staff safe.
- The County Attorney's Office handled a total of 77 child protection cases (CHIPS, permanency and truancy) in 2021. The total volume of child protection cases was down slightly, due in part to impacts of the pandemic and children not interacting with people who would be mandated reporters of maltreatment.
 - The length and duration of these existing Child Protection cases was intensive due to the challenges presented in finding available services within the community as the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic continued.
 - The County, in collaboration with schools and probation, navigated the obstacles of enforcing school attendance or engagement when children were no longer attending in-person or virtual school. Schools and the County worked to adapt to the changing landscape.
- There were 297 new civil files opened in 2021, including civil commitment, child support, paternity matters, requests for legal opinions, contract review, forfeiture, and data requests; and open civil matters as of December 2020 totaled more than 2,870.

Information Technology, Emergency Communications Service & Facilities Service – The Department of Enterprise Services supports critical infrastructure and multiple facilities across the County by providing high-quality services and programs. 2021 highlights/challenges include:

- Focus on Cyber security, the email security devices currently block, due to known malicious classifications, over 765,000 emails a year.

- Upgrade the entire network domain and email addresses to the new .gov domain. This provides a higher level of protection, as well as brings us into compliance with the Federal Gov't and Secretary of State voting requirements for cyber security.
- Maintain, support and secure the County email servers which process over 1.9 million emails a year.
- Maintain, support and secure over 275TB of data. As a point of reference 1 TB of data is equal to 83.3 million pages of text. *The county end users have added over 25TB of data in the last 9 months alone.*
- Maintain, support and secure over 210 networked servers both virtual and physical.
- Upgraded over 15 physical servers that support over 128 virtualized servers and over 300 virtual desktops.
- Maintain, support and secure 54 networked switch stacks over 16 physical locations.
- Remote work has continued to grow at a rapid rate. Which has presented some problems with existing network hardware due to age and capacity issues that will need to be addressed in 2022.
- The Records Management Division has removed over 64.6 tons of paper files from the courthouse vault that no longer need to be kept or are moved to a digital format.
- Started the process of moving the Law enforcement main talk groups on the ARMER radio system to be fully encrypted to protect the conversations from being intercepted as well as bring the County closer to the new encryption requirement placed on us from the FBI and BCA.
- Networked all of the County owned ARMER sites (ZZ sites) using microwave and fiber back hauls.
- Replace the rooftop HVAC unit at the 911 (ECC) center. This unit operates 24 x 7 x 365 as it services the entire 911 center. The new unit will provide better air exchange to bring us into better compliance with the CDC's requirements for air exchange.
- The County entered into a contract with Honeywell to optimize the energy use in all of our facilities with the energy savings from these changes being used to fund the upgrade of old or failing HVAC and lighting equipment across all of the county owned facilities.
- Using CARES Act funds the County was able to purchase and upgrade the core network equipment at the courthouse data center.
- Upgrade the network switch stack that serves all users in the Courthouse.

Administration and Human Resources – The County Administrator's Office provides central administration to all County Departments. The County Administrator is responsible for the overall management of county operations, and for carrying out all decisions, policies, ordinances and resolutions of the Board of Commissioners. The Human Resources Department assists all departments in the attraction and retention of qualified, productive, and customer-focused employees. The Offices made important changes in 2021 to 'modernize' how the County operates going forward.

- Chisago County changed payroll systems to an all-encompassing payroll/human resources system for all staff. This project took many years to complete.
- The County changed current health and dental benefit programs for all staff.
- The first compensation study began in over 15 years.
- The County managed the ever-changing COVID-19 related safety measures to ensure staff and guests were safe at County buildings.
- All labor contracts with the Teamster Local 320, self-represented and LELS labor unions were settled for 1-year terms.
- The County added additional Board of Commissioner advisory committees; Personnel/Human Resources, Technology, and Facilities/Maintenance.
- The Chisago County Board of Commissioners adopted formal Operating Guidelines for all Board Meetings.
- In 2021, the County hired 3 new department heads: Probation Director, County Recorder, County Assessor.

Partnerships and Cooperative Efforts – The County continues to invest in creative ways to protect the County's land and water resources fiscally through the Soil and Water Conservation District. Additionally, the County continues to fund the East Central Regional Libraries in Chisago County, the U of MN Extension Services, and the County's Agricultural Society (County Fair), and Historical Society.